

Having thus described the preferred embodiments, the invention is now claimed to be:

1 1. A text entry dialog box system for use with a display device, data input means
2 including pointing means, and processor means for executing an application program, and that
3 displays on a screen of said display device a dialog box into which an associated user enters data
4 during execution of said application program, said text entry dialog box system comprising:

5 a text entry space in a dialog box displayed on said screen of the display device for free-
6 form entry of text items into the system by the associated user;

7 a memory for storing the text items; and

8 means for selectively displaying a selection button on the screen of the display device in
9 association with the dialog box for selection by the pointing means.

1 2. The text entry dialog box system according to claim 1, wherein:

2 the means for selectively displaying the selection button includes means for selectively
3 displaying the selection button solely when the memory contains at least one previously entered
4 text item.

1 3. The text entry dialog box system according to claim 2, further comprising:

2 a parser for parsing the text items as parsed text items prior to storage in the memory; and
3 means for selectively storing the parsed text items in said memory based on the parsed
4 text item containing at least one character.

1 4. The text entry dialog box system according to claim 2, further comprising:

2 means for selectively displaying a list of previously entered text items.

1 5. The text entry dialog box system according to claim 4, further including:

2 means for selectively displaying said list of previously entered text items when the
3 selection button is selected by the associated user.

1 6. The text entry dialog box system according to claim 5, wherein:

2 the selection button is a drop-down arrow button on the screen of the display device in
3 association with the dialog box; and

4 the list of previously entered text items is a drop-down list on the screen of the display
5 device in association with the dialog box.

1 7. The text entry dialog box system according to claim 3, further including:

2 means for initializing the memory as empty each time the associated window is started.

1 8. A computer implemented method for facilitating input of text by an associated
2 user using a dialog box on a screen of a display device that is connected to said computer, the
3 method comprising:

4 displaying a text entry section of a dialog box on the screen of the display device;

5 counting entries stored previously in a memory;

6 based on the result of said counting step, selectively displaying a selection button on the
7 screen of the display device;

8 determining a user focus on said text entry section;

9 modifying the text entry section based upon actions by the user; and
10 repeating the counting, displaying, determining, and modifying steps.

1 **9.** The method according to claim **8**, wherein:

2 the step of displaying said selection button is conditional on the counting step returning a
3 count value greater than zero.

1 **10.** The method according to claim **9**, wherein:

2 the modifying step includes the step of selectively accepting a typed text entry from the
3 user when the user focus is directed to the text entry section.

1 **11.** The method according to claim **10**, wherein:

2 the modifying step includes the step of selectively performing a list selection routine
3 when the user focus is directed to the selection button.

1 **12.** The method according to claim **11**, wherein:

2 the step of counting entries previously stored in the memory includes counting previously
3 accepted typed text entries which contain at least one character.

1 **13.** The method according to claim **12**, wherein:

2 the step of selectively performing the list selection routine includes accepting user
3 selection of an entry from a list of the memory entries.

1 **14.** The method according to claim 13, further comprising the step of initializing the
2 memory.

1 **15.** The method according to claim 13, wherein:
2 the step of displaying the selection button includes displaying a drop-down arrow button
3 on the screen of the display device in association with the dialog box.

1 **16.** The method according to claim 13, further including the step of parsing the
2 accepted typed text entry.

1 **17.** A drop-down list box system for use with a processor, a display device, a main
2 memory, data input means including pointing means, means for storing an operating system and
3 at least one application program, and means for loading said operating system and said
4 application program into main memory, and that displays on a screen of said display device a
5 dialog box into which a user enters data during execution of said application program, said drop-
6 down list box system comprising:
7 means for displaying an editable text line;
8 means for displaying a selection list; and
9 means for selectively displaying a drop-down selection arrow conditional upon the
10 selection list containing at least one entry.

1 **18.** The system according to claim 17, wherein the selection list contains previous
2 text entries entered in the editable text line.

1 **19.** The system according to claim 17, further comprising a parser for parsing
2 contents of the editable text line which have been edited.

1 **20.** The system according to claim 17, wherein:
2 the selection list contains text entries previously entered in the editable text line, parsed
3 by the parser, and containing at least one character after the parsing.